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Clarington Diversity Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

April 10th, 2025, 7:00pm to 8:35 p.m.

Online via MS Teams

CDAC Members:

Tenzin Shomar
Rochelle Thomas (until 8:02pm)
Koren Kassirer
Bev Neblett
Starr Lee DeGrace
Councillor Anderson (until 7:30pm)
Lauren Reyes-Grange
Ron Hooper

Regrets:

Vincent Wong
Pranay Gunti

Also Present - Jeannette Whynot, Melissa Westover, Donnalee Smith (CLMA)

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

1. Land Acknowledgement:

S. DeGrace shared a personalized land acknowledgment, highlighting her background to the land and its original caretakers. S. DeGrace emphasized the importance of courage and collective impact on the journey towards meaningful reconciliation.

2. Declaration of interest

No declaration of interest by members.

3. Review and Approval of agenda

Motion to approve the agenda with amendments.

Moved by L. Reyes-Grange; seconded by B. Neblett

That the agenda for April 10, 2025, be amended to move Council updates to follow agenda item #4 and add Municipal Symposium Action Planning Meeting Update under Other Business.

Carried

4. Review of March 13, 2025, meeting minutes

Moved by L. Reyes-Grange; seconded by B. Neblett

That the minutes from March 13, 2025, for the CDAC meeting, be approved.

Carried

5. Council Update

C. Anderson thanked S. DeGrace for the impactful land acknowledgement she shared and invited her to attend a Council meeting to share a land acknowledgement. S. DeGrace accepted the invitation.

C. Anderson spoke on the creation of a hate crime unit within the Durham Region Police Service (DRPS). He will provide the committee with updates once the unit is up and running.

C. Anderson encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming federal election. He thanked the community for the outpouring of support for the local businesses and residents affected by the recent fire in downtown Bowmanville.

6. Staffing Update

M. Westover, Manager of Communications, spoke on the recent changes to the IDEA portfolio and updated the committee on the decision not to hire an additional IDEA staff member at this time. After reviewing the portfolio carefully, the decision was made to move the Indigenous part of the portfolio to the Strategic Initiatives Division. Additionally, efficiencies in some aspects of the portfolio were found, further increasing capacity to manage the work.

Until the IDEA Officer position is filled, Jeannette Whynot, Accessibility Coordinator, will be the staff liaison for the committee.

7. Personalizing Land Acknowledgements

Committee members discussed the importance of rotating the responsibility of delivering the land acknowledgement statement amongst committee members. T. Shomar will reach out to individual members prior to each meeting to let them know they'll be responsible for the land acknowledgement.

S. DeGrace offered support and guidance to committee members who choose to participate in sharing a personalized land acknowledgement.

8. Symbols of Hate

Committee members continued their discussion on symbols of hate. Members discussed their desire to review the history of symbols of hate from the previous DAC to see where things were left and determine the best path forward to address this issue.

L. Reyes-Grange, T. Shomar and K. Kassirer expressed interest in doing additional research on banning symbols of hate. T. Shomar advised he would determine the best

way for members to share their research outside of regular committee meetings and would report back. T. Shomar will contact committee members via email to confirm who is interested in forming a working group, similar to the bursary working group.

9. Inviting candidates for Federal Election to Meeting

L. Reyes-Grange shared that she would like to invite the federal election candidates to meet with the DAC and share their vision for fostering an inclusive community.

T. Shomar advised that there are some challenges with inviting election candidates to speak with the committee. While a good idea, there are some questions that need to be addressed and with the short election, it's not feasible for this election. T. Shomar recommended that the committee should look into what this could look like going forward and develop a plan for future elections.

10. CDAC 2025 Work Plan

Student Bursary Update

T. Shomar shared that the bursary is on track to be launched May 1st and will be open until May 31st. Minor changes to the application process were shared with the committee. Additionally, the working group recommended offering two grants of \$1250 each, instead of one grant like last year.

Motion to approve two student bursaries of \$1250 each for the 2025-2026 school year

Moved by Koren Kassier; seconded by Ron Hooper

Carried

T. Shomar also brought forward the working group's idea to include a mentorship opportunity to this year's recipients, ideally a mentorship with the Mayor or a member of Council. M. Westover noted that the ask to Council requires more information about the scope of commitment. Additionally, M. Westover asked the Committee to consider if they would expand the potential mentorship pool to include members of the DAC and senior leaders within the Municipality because this would allow a greater chance for a quality match.

L. Reyes-Grange shared that the company she works for has a very successful grant that includes a mentorship opportunity. Recipients have shared that the mentorship is more valuable to them than the money. Based on her employer's mentorship program, she suggested that mentors should be limited to the Mayor and Council or a significant community builder in our community, that they undergo mentorship training and commit to meeting their mentee 1 hour each month for 12 months.

Staff will bring this request forward and will share the feedback received with the

bursary working group.

Community Events

D. Smith from CLMA shared an overview of recent community events for Eid and Passover and how well-attended they were. CLMA will continue to offer community events that celebrate the growing diversity of Clarington.

Civic Youth Engagement

Model City Hall is currently on hold with plans to offer it in 2026.

Community Education

The committee discussed picking up other community education activities after the bursary was finished for this year. This includes how to engage with election candidates in the future, civic youth engagement, etc.

11. IDEA Update

Recruitment for new youth and organizational members

M. Westover shared that the Municipality has received youth and organization applications for the committee. They will be brought forward to the May 5th, 2025, GGC meeting. New members will attend the June meeting.

Additional rainbow crosswalks

M. Westover shared that a new rainbow crosswalk would be approximately \$30,000. Given the cost, it's currently not feasible to install more rainbow crosswalks at this time, but if the Committee is passionate about it, they could request Council consider it in future budgets.

Together, we are Clarington Campaign

The campaign will be launched in June. The Committee will be shown the video at the next meeting.

12. Other Business

Municipality Symposium Action Planning Meeting Update

B. Neblett shared some of the community connection events being planned, key messaging and hate incident protocols going forward.

Moved by L. Reyes-Grange; seconded by S. DeGrace

That the DAC meeting be adjourned at 8:35 pm

Carried

Next meeting May 8, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.